

Lake County annual budget shrinks again

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LAKE COUNTY - The Lake County Board of Commissioners passed the county budget for 2011 at a total of \$54,834,047, down from \$58,549,139 in 2010. The measure needed to be approved by April 1.

Budget Director Mike Matas thanked his staff for all their hard work and the commissioners for their assistance with the hearings.

"Due to uncertainty in the ever-changing environment our estimated appropriations measures are down 6.43 percent compared to what it was last year and our revenues are down 4.53 percent," he said.

One of the greatest losses of revenue has been caused by the loss of interest income. From 2007 to 2011, interest income declined by \$7.5 million or 85.88 percent.

"There will be further cuts, depending on the state's fiscal budget," Matas said.

Commissioner Dan Troy said the budget process gets more difficult each year. One slight improvement has been with sales tax. The county still has the 10 percent cut in inside millage for 2011 and 2012 due to the last real estate reassessment. The county lost more than \$1 million per year.

"Next year there's a reappraisal of property in this county and I think it's fair to assume that property values based on sales activity in '09, '10 and '11 are not going to go up in Lake County they are probably going to go down, which means we will take a further hit in that in 2012," Troy said.

The Local Government Fund and other monies from the state will be cut, but the actual amounts are not yet known.

Currently, the county revenues are at 2003-2004 levels.

Troy noted the state mandates what the county must do including financing: the courts, the departments which record properties, value and collect taxes on properties, the prosecutor's office and more.

"This budget allows us to continue to provide those statutory responsibilities but not at the same level of service that people have become accustomed to," Troy said. "I think down the road we're going to have to make tougher and tougher decisions, and I think we need to look at those things that we are not statutorily required to provide, in some cases doing things for other communities that we just cannot do anymore."

The county will need to count on department heads to contain their expenses because it is likely to get worse before it gets better, he said.

Commissioner Bob Aufuldish said the commissioners met numerous times with department heads and explained the need to cut costs and complimented Matas and his staff for their hard work.

"We haven't made a lot of friends in the last several months because we've had to make some tough decisions," Commissioner Ray Sines said. "Everybody in this environment had to make tough decisions."

He said the county was a family and they felt for the families, of everyone whom they had to let go.

Lake County Budget Comparison 2010-2011

General Fund Appropriation	2010	2011
Board of County Commissioners	\$1,163,238	\$961,743
Information Technology	\$770,291	\$694,192
Buildings & Grounds	\$3,607,134	\$3,306,177
Planning Commission	\$322,696	\$359,033
Building Regulation	\$428,799	\$401,594
Non-Departmental	\$5,323,913	\$4,504,280
Special Police Prosecutors	\$1,790	\$1,790
Insurance on Property	\$8,500,000	\$8,450,000
Taxes	\$60,900	\$56,000
Humane Society	\$500	\$500
T.B. Clinics & Care	\$18,937	\$18,937
Registration of Vital Statistics	\$2,500	\$5,000
Hydrophobia	\$1,000	\$750
Apiary Inspection	\$500	\$1,000
Lake County Fair Board	\$3,300	\$3,300
OSU Extension	\$125,000	\$110,000
Bureau of Inspection	\$80,000	\$78,000
Contingencies	\$700,000	\$700,000
Tax Settlement Deductions	\$160,000	\$148,000
Medical and Hospital Fees	\$1,500	\$1,500
LC Economic Development	\$125,000	\$110,000
Neighboring Grant	\$36,973	\$35,000
Sub-Grantee Projects	\$0	\$25,000
Auditor General Office	\$845,971	\$796,561
Auditor Real Property	\$46,869	\$47,569
Treasurer	\$381,245	\$361,390
Recorder	\$598,350	\$547,858
Microfilm	\$20,000	\$15,000
Prosecutor	\$3,589,326	\$3,337,846
Sheriff General Office	\$14,129,379	\$13,244,991
Sheriff Central Communications	\$1,867,925	\$1,719,274
Coroner	\$415,604	\$388,704
Clerk of Courts	\$1,627,250	\$1,572,196
Common Pleas Court I	\$413,984	\$436,946
Common Pleas Court II	\$408,268	\$417,844
Common Pleas Court V	\$447,094	\$445,761
Common Pleas Court IV	\$382,969	\$383,844
Probate Court	\$893,665	\$907,059
Juvenile Court	\$1,413,835	\$1,423,807
Juvenile Probation	\$528,990	\$486,110
Detention Center	\$1,530,800	\$1,585,317
Intake Department	\$444,468	\$452,085
Child Placement	\$25,000	\$5,000
Domestic Relations	\$1,157,800	\$1,054,848
Jury Commission	\$15,041	\$17,436
Adult Probation	\$723,036	\$532,414
Court of Appeals	\$195,100	\$104,000
Public Defender	\$1,357,608	\$1,389,701
Painesville Municipal Court	\$194,551	\$198,300
Mentor Municipal Court	\$135,410	\$135,500
Willoughby Municipal Court	\$211,175	\$213,000
Board of Elections	\$1,539,566	\$1,175,241
Engineer Tax Map	\$260,300	\$223,068
Soldiers Relief	\$700,000	\$650,000
Veterans Services	\$564,213	\$544,659
Community Corrections Planning Coordinator	\$50,376	\$50,17
Grand Total	\$58,549,139	\$54,834,047